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**EDC 423**

### Informational Text Plan

**To begin**

1. Read the National Geographic article you were assigned: See How Cheetahs Survive In The Wild. This is an expository/informational text appropriate for students in grades 2-3 (Pioneer edition is 2-3; Pathfinder is 4-6).

**Create a text-based discussion plan that includes the following:**

**Part 1: Text Analysis**

1. Read the text.
2. Make notes about the text’s challenges and resources. Be sure to consider text features we discussed in class, such as genre, text organization, graphics, transitions, connectives, referents. Also be sure to consider how well the text hangs together (coherence) and inferences the reader needs to make. To do this, create a table in Word where you list the page number, ending phrase (so I know where you are), and your comment (like below).

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| Resources | Challenges |
| Page 10 The heading “See how Cheetahs survive in the wild” sets purpose/goal to where the article will take place- the wild. | Page 12 There is a lot of vocabulary words in the area without any description of what they mean- it would be easier if they were defined somewhere on that exact page. Also, word wise is a great tool to help the reader understand the article. However, it is placed towards the end of the reading where the student may not find it until after they have read the entire article. It should be placed at the beginning of the article thus helping to improve student understanding more. |
| Page 10 The graphic assists readers to get a better feel for the animal and how they might act. | Page 14 at the bottom let column it says that if Cheetahs don’t catch their prey within the 30 seconds that they run the fastest they must find another prey or go hungry- students might question why and they give no specific reason. |
| Page 12-13 The graphics help to assist readers further into seeing the animal in its natural habitat and learning more about them. It provides the reader with a visual understanding with what a cheetah looks like and begins to share insight as to how a cheetah survives.  Quote from page 12: “It’s tan, spotted fur is an adaptation, too. It helps the cheetah blend in with the grass. This is called **camouflage**”.This definition is helpful because it introduces the idea of how the cheetah blends in and then explains that this idea is recognized as camouflage. | Page 14 “A Cheetahs claws are blunt” - what does that even mean? |
| Page 14 The simile between the long, flexible spine and how it acts like a spring helps readers to connect what the author was trying to say about the spine in a way that students would understand. | Heading- Built to Hunt page 12 “Yet the cheetah is one of the world’s most successful predators.”  \* The text introduces the idea of what a predator is, however, it does not explain the concept thus assuming the reader catches on or already knows what this word/concept means. |
| Page 17 The word-wise section is very useful because it defines all of the words that might be challenging for young readers. | Page 14 When it talks about the tail being like a boats rudder, students will get confused by this because they might not be familiar with that term. |
| Page 16-17 The picture shown helps to label the different parts of a Cheetah that are important in their survival in the wild because they adapt to their environments. | Page 14 “Other big cats have round, fluffy tails” - what does that matter? It’s a random piece of information that could be taken out. |
| The entire article gives good descriptions of Cheetahs and about their bodies, which definitely helps readers to understand more about that animal and about things that they might not have known before about Cheetahs. | Page 14 When it talks about how the claws do not retract all the way because it helps to prevent skidding, young readers might not necessarily know what skidding means and it is not explained or defined in the article at all.  \*Especially English Language Learners who may not have developed a strong vocabulary. |
| There were very few, if any referential words in the text thus making it easier for readers to understand. The text would refer to each individual animal by its name thus eliminating confusion. | Page 16 The section labeled Cheetahs in the Wild is placed in a location that is not helpful to the reader. It is placed on pages (16-17) but if placed on (14-15) where the descriptions about the cheetah’s body are it could be more effective because it provides the student with text and a visual for similar ideas. |
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**Part 2: Learning Goals**

After considering the features of the text, think about what students should be able to understand and learn from reading and talking about the text.

1. Identify the most important content or information in the text. In other words, outline the main ideas of the text. The main ideas of the text are about the different ways that Cheetahs adapt to their environments in order to survive out in the wild. It mainly talks about their bodies and how certain aspects that they have help to aid them in protection and finding prey. Without the adaptations (such as camouflage, their tails being like rudders, and their claws) these animals might not be able to survive in the wild on their own. Whether or not animals survive in the wild is based on the concept of predator/prey. How well predators catch their prey and how well prey stay hidden depends on an animal’s ability to adapt thus affecting their survival. Since Cheetahs have these characteristics they are able to prosper in the wild grasslands of Africa.
2. Identify some important concepts or “big ideas” that students can learn from reading and talking about this text. The big ideas might be related to content areas (science, civics, etc.) or to text (how texts are organized, how writers find out the information, etc.). A big idea that we can take from the text is about the animal food chain. We can learn that the food chain goes from predators, which are the strongest, to the prey, which are the weakest. They often share similar characteristics, but they also differ in many ways. Predators are more dominant because they are stronger and larger, whereas prey are smaller and weaker. This can connect to the circle of life and how animals are connected through what they consume.
3. Use your outline of #1 and 2 above (main and big ideas) to create learning goals for your discussion. What should your students know/learn from reading this text? You should frame you learning goals as questions (e.g. “How are caves formed?”). For each learning goal, list information students need to understand in order to reach that goal. Learning Goal: How do animals survive in the wild?

* Students will understand why certain animals are considered predators and others are considered prey.
* Students will understand what characteristics make an animal a predator.
* Students will understand what characteristics make an animal prey.
* Students will understand the concepts of predator and prey and what that means in the life cycle based on the example of the cheetah and the gazelle in the article.

**Part 3: Planning the Launch**

Consider how you will launch your topics and discussion. Script (that means write out what you will say) your launch, considering the points we discussed in class about the purpose and length of a launch.

1) Activate Prior Knowledge: Students will be handed a few pictures of different animals in small groups. They will be asked to order the animals from strongest to weakest and write down a reason why. If students struggle with this a way to help them figure it out could be done by asking them, “Do you think you would be scared of this animal? (Tapping in and asking them to make personal connections)

Next, the class will come back together to share their list and briefly share why.

Together, the class will construct a list of strong animals versus weak animals.

2) Set a purpose:

Once the class has constructed a list of strong animals versus weak animals the teacher can show a small clip to help the students understand the difference between what animals are predators and what animals are prey:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhDS7YN_lII>

Finally, the teacher will hold up the article about cheetahs and will ask the class: “With a raised hand, who can tell me whether this animal is a predator or a prey?” Once the class figures it out the teacher will flip through the text and use the images and headings to capture what the article is about.

**Part 4: Planning the Exit**

Consider how you might assess student learning of the important ideas in the text. How will you know if students have met the learning goals that you set?

In order to understand and learn if students have met learning goals, the teacher will assign a project about predators versus prey. Once the students have picked an animal, class time will be set aside where the student will research this animal (a guide will be provided for each child as to what kind of research they need). For homework, students will be asked to spend a week to make a poster with pictures and small paragraphs/captions about:

* + 1. Why this animal is a predator/prey.
    2. 3 Characteristics that explain why the student believes this.
    3. An “Interesting Fact” section (complete using outside research)

Once the students bring all of their posters in, they will be hung up on the walls. Then the students will be able to walk around the room and write down one thing that they learned from each poster and any questions that they still have.

**Part 5: Planning Ways to Support Student Interactions with Text Ideas**

1. Think about the goals you created in Part 2, and the information students need to understand and reach the goals.
2. Decide where in the text to stop, and what question you will ask to help students build knowledge toward the goals. The Rubrics for Assessing Text-Based Discussions (on the Caves page of the wiki), and the information on kinds of questions (PPT from Oct 22-29 on the wiki) will provide you with ideas for crafting your questions.
3. Create a chart (like the ones in the Caves and Panda examples) where you write the page number and your questions

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| --- | --- |
| Page/ending phrase | Question |
| Page 12 “A Cheetah can run fast..” | Q: So what do we know so far?  A: That the Cheetah can only run fast for about 30 seconds.  Q: Good job, but do you know why?  A: Yes, because it runs out of breathe, just like humans do when they run too much. |
| Page 12 “Every part of a Cheetah’s body..” | Q: In your own words what is an adaptation?  A: Something that helps an animal to survive in its natural habitat.  Q: Very good, can you think of any adaptations that animals need in order to survive?  A: Camouflage!  Q: Yes, exactly, good job! Now do you know how exactly camouflage might help animals?  A: Yes, it helps them blend into their environment that way predators don’t eat them.  Q: Wonderful! |
| Page 14 “Cheetahs can run faster…” | Q: After reading that Gazelles can run 50 mph, what can we assume about the Cheetahs?  A: They have to run faster than that because it says that they are the fastest land animal in the world.  Q: Very good! Now what characteristics make the Cheetah such a fast runner?  A: Because it is very lean and its bones have adaptations to help it to run faster in its environment. |
| Page 14 “To run so fast…” | Q: Why can a Cheetah only run fast for about 30 seconds?  A: Because it takes a lot of oxygen to run that fast.  Q: Excellent, but why does it have to run fast to begin with?  A: Because it is trying to catch its prey which will be its food for the day and if they don’t run fast they won’t be able to catch it. |
| Page 14 “Adaptations in the Cheetah’s feet…” | Q: Why do the Cheetah’s feet need to have adaptations?  A: It is because their claws have to dig into the ground during a chase in order to run faster.  Q: Exactly. But how does the Cheetah not slide all over the place while it’s running?  A: Because it has another adaptation that makes its feet hard and they have tough ridges that make it not slip all over the place. |
| Page 16 “The Cheetah must eat quickly…” | Q: What inference can you make about this sentence?  A: I think that something else will want to come and eat the Gazelle, or even the Cheetah!  Q: Correct. Now can you name any other animal that might do this?  A: A lion or a leopard.  Q: Good, but do you know why?  A: Because they won’t have to do the hunting, they can just take it from the Cheetah. |
| Page 17 The graphic | Q: By looking at the picture can you tell me some type of adaptation that Cheetahs have and name why it is so important?  A: It has grooved foot pads, which allow it to run better.  Q: Good, do you know what other three adaptations can help a Cheetah while running?  A: Its lungs, claws and tail. |
| Page 14: “This cat looks like it is flying.” | Q: So do cheetahs fly?  A: Some students may have misinterpreted this section and may think yes, others might say, no they do not fly.  F: What from the text makes you think that cheetahs fly or do not fly?  A: They run for 30 seconds, it is just a way to explain their speed. Or: yes, they do fly while they run which is what makes them so fast.  (Depends on the level of understanding and comprehension of the reader). |
| Concluding sentence: “All these adaptations make the cheetah an awesome predator.” | Q: What adaptations does the author mean: environmental or physically of the cheetahs body?  A: The author includes both environment and physical influences and characteristics of the cheetah.  F: Do you agree with this statement? Are cheetahs an awesome predator?  A: Depending, students may respond yes because or no because |
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**Part 6. Reflect on what each of you (you and your partner contributed to this learning experience).**

* What knowledge did you **bring** to the task that helped make partner work and this learning experience about text-based discussions productive?
* What knowledge did you **gain** from your partner as part of this learning experience?

Danielle: What I brought to this project was that I understood most of the different tasks that were presented before me. I was able to complete three out of the five sections on my own and understand how they link back to the article and the main topic of the project.

I gained from my partner more information about the launch and the exit sections because before we joined together for this project I was still confused. I kind of understood the sections and what to do but I couldn’t figure out a way to put them into ideas on our topic. She aided me in gaining a stronger understanding for those two tasks and with her explanations and examples I understand it more. From this learning experience, as a whole, I think that Samantha and I gained a stronger informational text plan because we each did the project on our own and then we combined it. This allowed us both to bring our strong points to the project as well as helping each other with our weak spots. She understood some things that I did not, as well as I understood things that she did not, so we both worked well together on this project.

Samantha: I brought my individual ideas and interpretations of the text to this learning experience and this is important because everyone understands and interprets differently. I understood the text analysis, launch, and exit pretty well while my partner understood the other sections better. We worked together to help one another understand the sections of this project that confused us both. For example, I gained more knowledge about learnings goals as well as part 5 (planning ways to support student interactions with text ideas). Working with a partner helped me learn more from this project because combining ideas opened our eyes and brains a little more as to how another person might interpret both this text and project.